

MENTAL HEALTH, DISABILITIES & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Facts about mental illness and recovery:

Mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence.

Mental disorders are the leading cause of disability (lost years of productive life) in the North America, Europe and, increasingly, in the world. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.

Mental illnesses strike individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and the old are especially vulnerable.

Without treatment the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives; The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than 100 billion dollars each year in the United States.

The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports;

Early identification and treatment is of vital importance; By getting people the treatment they need early, recovery is accelerated and the brain is protected from further harm related to the course of illness.

Facts About People with Disabilities:

Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not bravery and courage.

A wheelchair, like a bicycle or an automobile, is a personal assistive device that enables someone to get around.

Lip-reading skills vary among people who use them and are never entirely reliable

Although most people who are blind develop their remaining senses more fully, they do not have a "sixth sense."

In the past, grouping people with disabilities in separate schools and institutions reinforced this misconception. Today, many people with disabilities take advantage of new opportunities to join mainstream society.

Substance Abuse Facts:

One in four US deaths can be attributed to alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug use.

Tobacco users run the biggest risk of harm, since the majority of those deaths—430,700 annually—are associated with smoking.

Excessive alcohol use is responsible for 100,000 deaths annually.

16,000 deaths annually are due to illicit drug use, but this estimate is likely to be conservative as substance abuse is indirectly associated with deaths from diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, homicides, and other violent crimes and incidental injuries.

The economic burden of substance abuse to the US economy is estimated at a staggering \$414 billion annually. Alcohol abuse alone costs nearly \$166 billion each year

Health care costs for employees with alcohol abuse problems cost nearly twice as much as those of other employees.

Children from families with substance-abusing parents are more likely to have problems with delinquency, poor school performance, and emotional difficulties than their peers from homes without substance abuse

What Do King County Employee Giving Program Dollars Do?

Mental Health:

Your contribution makes it possible for local mental health organizations to offer a full range of quality outpatient and residential services for individuals with mental illness and their families.

Your tax-deductible gifts help local mental health organizations to offer responsive, accessible, and effective mental health service in partnership with our community so that families and individuals at all stages of life can achieve and sustain health and wellness.

Disabilities:

Your contribution will go a long way toward helping organizations better serve those who seek assistance. Funds raised by the organizations from private donations are used to supplement existing grants from government or foundation sources and to offer new and innovative programs to those in need.

Mental health counseling for individuals, couples, and families; case management, daycare, and tangible children's goods to stabilize homeless and at-risk families; community violence prevention

Substance Abuse:

Serve as advocates of the long-term mentally ill or severely psychiatrically disabled, regardless of age, sex, socio-economic status, or cultural heritage.

Provide public education and information on the need for improved direct services to the mentally ill.

Examine existing health care programs, systems, institutions, or laws which comply with high standards of service.

Cooperate with and support those agencies, systems, institutions, or laws which comply with high standards of service.

Recommend alternatives or modifications to those programs, systems, institutions or laws which jeopardize, delay or interfere with optimum effective diagnosis or treatment of the mentally ill.

Collect and disseminate information concerning the etiology, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness.

Reach out to meet the needs of families of the mentally ill through supportive crisis and referral self-help groups.

Act as a resource to the community.

Encourage and generate funds for research and education on behalf of the mentally ill.

Solicit, collect, receive, hold, invest, distribute and disburse donations, subscriptions, gifts, bequests, and other funds for the purpose of the corporation.